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HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

Fiftieth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FIRST PART (PUBLIC)* OF THE 1315th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 6 April 1994, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. ANDO

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(a) Annual report submitted by the Human Rights Committee under article 45 of the Covenant (continued)

* The summary record of the second part (closed) of the meeting appears as document CCPR/C/SR.1315/Add.1.

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

ACTION BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION (continued)

(a) ANNUAL REPORT SUBMITTED BY THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE UNDER ARTICLE 45 OF THE COVENANT (continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to continue its consideration of the working group's recommendation regarding the Committee's annual report to the General Assembly.

2. Mr. AGUILAR said that he agreed that summaries of the consideration of State party reports should not be included in the Committee's report. The summaries were very long, and greatly increased the cost of producing the report; they were also very bland, and did not give the impression that the Committee acted in unison.

3. It should be made very clear to the reader that in order to obtain further information he should refer to the relevant summary records. The report should also include much fuller final comments.

4. Mr. HERNDL said that he also agreed that the Committee should in future dispense with the summaries of the consideration of State party reports; that would facilitate and speed up the production of the Committee's report and ease the burden on the Secretariat.

5. The visual presentation of the report needed to be improved. Furthermore, the Secretariat must ensure that summary records were available. The translation of original summary records needed to be given priority so as to speed up the issue of summary records. Moreover, summary records should be made available not only to members of the Committee but also to all United Nations information centres around the world.

6. He felt that it had been unwise to change the name of the Committee's Yearbook to "Official Records of the Human Rights Committee", particularly since in future the Yearbook would become even more important if the summaries in the reports were eliminated. In that connection, summaries of introductory statements made by the Under-Secretary-General should also be eliminated.

7. Mrs. EVATT said that she agreed with the comments made by the preceding speakers. It was critical that summary records should be produced promptly and made available as soon as possible after each session; that would enable the Committee to give more prominence to other matters in its report.

8. Mr. AGUILAR said that members of the Committee should send suggestions to the working group during the inter-sessional period so that at the July session the working group would be able to make specific proposals. He fully agreed with Mrs. Higgins that there should be a section on compliance, and also that the Committee's concluding comments should be publicized more effectively; members of the Committee could help in that process.

(Mr. Aguilar)

9. He agreed with Mr. Herndl that the United Nations format was very ugly; some changes should be made.

10. Mrs. HIGGINS said that she felt that efforts to disseminate the Committee's conclusions through the press and press conferences were important but had had limited success; it might be more effective for each member to make contact with the press and the media.

11. The CHAIRMAN said that starting from the previous session, he had tried to hold a press conference on the last day of the Committee's session, at which the Committee's final comments (which had already been made available to States parties) had been distributed.

12. Mr. POCAR said that he was disturbed that the 1993 report had not yet been published; that situation was not acceptable.

13. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee needed to agree, at the very least, that its forthcoming annual report should not include summaries of the consideration of State party reports.

14. Mr. AGUILAR said that it would not be possible to include such summaries in the 1994 report because the summary records from October and November 1993 were not yet available. The Committee's decision would therefore relate to the reports for 1995 and future years.

15. The CHAIRMAN said that he took it that the Committee agreed that its reports should not include summaries of the consideration of State party reports.

16. It was so decided.

17. The CHAIRMAN said that the Rapporteur would consult the working group regarding possibilities for a new format.

The meeting rose at 3.50 p.m.